

DECISION



THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL  
OF THE UNITED STATES  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20548

FILE: B-206426

DATE: May 24, 1982

MATTER OF: Duane C. Hollan - Miscellaneous expenses -  
Mobile home relocation

DIGEST: Where Government employee, incident to a transfer of official duty station, incurs expenses necessary to connect his mobile home to the available utilities at the new mobile home court, those expenses, including required parts, are reimbursable under FTR paras. 2-3.1b(1) and (2), as miscellaneous expenses. To the extent that Fred T. Larsen, B-186711, January 31, 1978, is inconsistent with Edelmiro Amaya, B-201645, December 4, 1981, Larsen will no longer be followed.

This decision is in response to a request by Florence K. Entwistle, an authorized certifying officer, of the Bureau of Reclamation, United States Department of the Interior for an advance decision as to the legality of reimbursing Mr. Duane C. Hollan for certain miscellaneous expenses totaling \$99.03 in connection with his transfer of official duty station from Cle Elum, Washington to Oroville, Washington. Since Mr. Hollan lived in a mobile home, he elected to move it to Oroville in lieu of transporting household goods. In doing so, he incurred various expenses for materials necessary to connect his mobile home to the available utilities at the new mobile home court.

For the reasons set forth below, Mr. Hollan may be reimbursed for the claimed miscellaneous expenses.

Mr. Hollan's claim for the following expenses as miscellaneous expenses was denied by the certifying officer:

1.	Water parts	\$ 17.65
2.	DB Cable (30 feet)	70.50
3.	Connector	6.50
4.	Bushing	.50
5.	Tax on the above	<u>3.68</u>

Total disallowed \$ 99.03

These expenses were disallowed as miscellaneous expenses based on our decision in Fred T. Larsen, B-186711, January 31, 1978. There, we disallowed reimbursement of miscellaneous expenses consisting of money spent for additional piping for sewer, water, and fuel lines. We said this would be underwriting the cost of new equipment for the employee's home which the regulations did not contemplate.

In requesting reconsideration, Mr. Hollan contends that the expenses were necessary to relocate and reassemble his new home. Apparently, the available utility hook-ups were further from his mobile home at the new court than they were at his former residence. As a consequence, Mr. Hollan incurred expenses of \$99.03 in order to hook-up the basic plumbing and electrical equipment. Therefore, Mr. Hollan urges that the materials were necessary to reassemble his mobile home and should not be considered as new equipment.

The authority governing reimbursement to Federal civilian employees of miscellaneous expenses incurred by reason of a transfer of official duty station is contained in the Federal Travel Regulations, FPMR 101-7 (May 1973) (FTR), Chapter 2, Part 3. The type of expenses to be reimbursed under these provisions are those that are common to discontinuing and reestablishing residences, and general types of expenses inherent in the relocation of a residence. Specifically, the costs intended to be reimbursed as miscellaneous expenses include the fees for disconnecting and connecting the appliances, equipment and utilities involved in a relocation and the cost of converting appliances for operations on available utilities. FTR para. 2-3.1b(1). Paragraph 2-3.1b(2) specifically authorizes reimbursement of the "[f]ees for unblocking and blocking and related expenses in connection with relocating a mobile home \* \* \*." Notwithstanding the foregoing, the regulations do not authorize reimbursement of the expenses incurred in connection with structural alterations, the remodeling or modernizing of living quarters, garages or other buildings to accommodate privately owned automobiles, appliances or equipment, or the cost of replacing or repairing worn-out or defective appliances, or equipment shipped to the new location.

Therefore, we must decide whether the parts for which reimbursement is sought were parts utilized in connecting utilities or were new equipment utilized in a structural alteration, remodeling or modernizing of living quarters. The former is a reimbursable miscellaneous expense, but the latter is not allowable.

According to the record, Mr. Hollan's expenses involve equipment necessary to connect indoor plumbing and electricity, which are ordinary, and necessary utilities. In Loyd C. Dille B-182168, April 22, 1975, we held that an employee moving a house trailer in connection with a transfer of official duty station is entitled to reimbursement for the expenses necessary to extend water and sewer pipes to the trailer at the new site as miscellaneous expenses. Similarly, in Edelmiro Amaya, B-201645, December 4, 1981, we held that the expenses incurred by an employee to connect his mobile home to the available utilities at the mobile park were necessary expenses incident to the relocation of a mobile home and may be reimbursed as miscellaneous expenses. Therefore, based on the record, we conclude that Mr. Hollan's claimed expenses are necessary miscellaneous expenses for equipment utilized to connect the utilities at his new duty station incident to the relocation of his mobile home.

In the submission, the certifying officer stated that she relied on Fred T. Larsen, B-186711, January 31, 1978, to deny Mr. Hollan's claim. In Edelmiro Amaya, B-201645, December 4, 1981, we allowed expenses similar to those incurred by Mr. Hollan as necessary expenses of connecting a mobile home to the available utilities. In light of the specific provision in the FTR authorizing the reimbursement of blocking, unblocking, and related expenses, in connection with relocating a mobile home, we believe Amaya is the preferable approach. Thus, to eliminate further potential confusion, to the extent that Larsen is inconsistent with Amaya, Larsen will no longer be followed.

In view of the foregoing, the \$99.03 claimed on the travel voucher for the material necessary to connect the mobile home to the available utility hook-up may be reimbursed to Mr. Hollan as miscellaneous expenses.

*Milton F. Rowland*  
for Comptroller General  
of the United States